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Cubans Gave Limited Aid To Weathermen, FBI Says

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Cuban espionage agents operating in the United States and Canada supplied limited aid to the Weather Underground, a militant antiwar organization, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, according to a top-secret report of the FBI.

Some assistance was also provided by North Vietnam, the report says, but there was no evidence that the Soviet Union, China or Eastern European nations ever made active attempts to stir up American dissidents.

The 400-page report, a copy of which has been obtained by The New York Times, was prepared in August 1976 after the Department of Justice opened a criminal investigation into charges that bureau agents had committed burglaries and carried out illegal mail openings and wiretaps in their attempts to apprehend fugitive Weathermen.

The closely held report — only 10 copies were sent to the bureau director, Clarence M. Kelley — was aimed at establishing that members of the Weather Underground were operating as secret agents of a foreign power and were thus legitimate targets of counterintelligence measures.

THE REPORT disclosed, however, that Communist bloc nations had given little tangible support to the American antiwar movement. The report was based on information from the CIA, several foreign intelligence services, a wide range of American and foreign police agencies, electronic eavesdropping and reports of several confidential informers.

The following were some of the key points:

- Three years before militant members of the Students for a Democratic Society split off to form the Weather Underground organization in 1970, North Vietnamese and Cuban officials were influencing radical antiwar strategy through foreign meetings. Many of these meetings were

held in Communist countries, including Hungary, Czechoslovakia and North Vietnam.

- The conduit for contact within the borders of the United States were agents assigned to the staff of the Cuban mission to the United Nations in New York. These agents arranged for American youths to be inculcated with revolutionary fervor and, occasionally, to be trained in practical weaponry through the so-called Venceremos Brigades, nominally sugar cane harvesting units.

- After the Weathermen went "underground" in 1970 and many of them were being sought by the FBI on criminal charges, Cuban intelligence officers were in touch with them from both the New York mission and the Cuban Embassy in Canada.

- Cuban officials helped several Weather Underground adherents who feared arrest in the United States to travel to Prague, Czechoslovakia, and then to re-enter the United States surreptitiously.

The report linked the growing militancy of certain members of the Students for a Democratic Society, which resulted in the so-called Days of Rage in Chicago in 1968, to North Vietnamese advice the year before to choose youngsters who would battle with police.

THE NORTH VIETNAMESE, according to SDS literature of the time, had suggested that the antiwar movement needed not just intellectual protesters but also physically rugged recruits. The Days of Rage, unlike previous antiwar demonstrations in which clashes seemed to be accidental, was a violent protest.

On the whole, however, the report appeared to be more significant for the paucity of support by Communist bloc nations than for the extent of it. There was no firm evidence that senior Communist intelligence services in the Soviet Union, China or Eastern Europe ever made any active attempt to incite American dissidents, the report said.